

Tiahrt	Watkins	Wicker
Tierney	Watt (NC)	Wise
Towns	Watts (OK)	Wolf
Traficant	Waxman	Woolsey
Turner	Weldon (FL)	Wynn
Upton	Wexler	Yates
Walsh	Weygand	Young (FL)
Wamp	White	
Waters	Whitfield	

NAYS—43

Abercrombie	Gutierrez	Pascrell
Baldacci	Gutknecht	Pickett
Becerra	Hastings (FL)	Poshard
Borski	Hefley	Ramstad
Clay	Hilleary	Schaffer, Bob
Clayburn	Hilliard	Scott
Costello	Hinchey	Sessions
DeFazio	Kucinich	Stupak
Deutsch	LoBiondo	Taylor (MS)
English	McDermott	Thompson
Filner	McNulty	Velazquez
Fox	Menendez	Visclosky
Gephardt	Moran (KS)	Weller
Gibbons	Obey	
Green	Oliver	

ANSWERED "PRESENT"—1

Spratt

NOT VOTING—33

Berry	Harman	Oberstar
Callahan	Hunter	Riggs
Clement	Hyde	Rush
Crane	John	Schiff
Crapo	Johnson (WI)	Smith (OR)
Davis (IL)	Lantos	Snowbarger
Edwards	McDade	Talent
Ensign	Miller (FL)	Torres
Eshoo	Mink	Vento
Furse	Nadler	Weldon (PA)
Gonzalez	Norwood	Young (AK)

□ 1023

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi changed his vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mr. EVERETT changed his vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMP). Will the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TIAHRT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minute speeches on each side.

HONORING PRISONERS OF WAR ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR

(Mr. GINGRICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw my colleagues' attention, and the country's attention, to the 25th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, and in particular to the sacrifice and the service to America of prisoners of war and their families.

I think it is all too easy in peacetime to forget exactly how much was sacrificed. I think it is all too easy to forget that the young men and women we have in Bosnia, the situation developing in Iraq, the 38,000 young Americans in Korea, all of them are risking their lives, separated from their families, doing what it takes so that America can be free and safe.

We in this House have the great honor to serve with a man who was courageous in fighting for his country, a man who was courageous in serving as a prisoner of war, a man who came back to continue serving his country as a State legislator and a Member of Congress.

We all today have a chance, not just here in the Congress to vote on a resolution honoring prisoners of war, but to call on every county, every city, and every State some time during this 25th anniversary year to hold an event honoring those who have been prisoners of war, honoring their families and their children, recognizing what they do for all of us, and recognizing how much our freedom depends on their sacrifice.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing a great American who we are privileged to have serve with us, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON).

PROTECT EFFICIENT, GOOD QUALITY HOME HEALTH CARE

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, because of an ill-advised provision in last year's budget agreement, providers of home health care all across America are in danger of being forced out of business. Many of these home health agencies have been crucial in our efforts to control health care costs.

Unfortunately, because of the way the budget agreement was drafted, Medicare reimbursement rates for some agencies will be higher than others simply because of how those agencies structure their fiscal years. Further, the agreement requires that home health care agencies be in compliance with Federal spending caps before the government tells agencies what those caps are. Mr. Speaker, where is the logic in that?

Today I am proud to introduce a bipartisan bill with the gentleman from Utah (Mr. COOK), and 18 other cosponsors, that will help these providers to continue their important work.

Mr. Speaker, our bill allows home health care agencies, if they wish, to calculate their caps based on 1995 levels rather than the 1994 levels mandated by the budget agreement. The bill also takes into account the wide variety of agency fiscal years and allows for more home health care visits to our seniors under the caps. Finally, we push back the date of compliance, giving providers time to meet the requirements.

This problem is big and getting bigger. I urge my colleagues to join me in protecting efficient, good quality home health care. Our senior citizens deserve no less.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD:

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR
HOME CARE,

Washington, DC, February 10, 1998.

Hon. JAMES P. MCGOVERN,
House of Representatives, Cannon House Office
Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE MCGOVERN: On behalf of the National Association for Home Care (NAHC), the nation's largest home health organization representing home care providers, caregivers and the patients they serve, I would like to commend you for introducing legislation that would address some of the devastating inequities in the interim payment system (IPS). We wholeheartedly support your legislation, which will delay its implementation and change the base year for calculation of per-beneficiary caps.

As you know, IPS became effective with cost reporting periods starting October 1, 1997. The new per-beneficiary limits, however, will not be published until April. This means that approximately 2/3 of home health providers will be on the new IPS without knowing what their per-beneficiary limits will be. Your legislation, by delaying the implementation date, would ensure that providers would not have to be "flying blind" under a wholly new system.

Equally important is your provision which would change the base year for calculation of the per-beneficiary caps from fiscal year 1994 to "fiscal year 1995 or, at the election of the agency, calendar year 1995." This change will level the playing field among agencies and cap reimbursement rates at more reasonable amounts.

Once again, thank you for your leadership on this most important issue. We look forward to working with you to assure passage of the legislation. Please contact Eric Sokol or Lucia DiVenere of my staff if we can be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,

VAL J. HALAMANDARIS,
President.

HOME HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION
OF MASSACHUSETTS, INC.,
Boston, MA, February 11, 1998.

Hon. JAMES P. MCGOVERN,
Cannon House Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCGOVERN: On behalf of the 155 members of the Home & Health Care Association of Massachusetts, I am delighted to offer our full endorsement of the McGovern/Cook bill that amends the Interim Payment System for Home Health Care under the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. We understand that Senator Kennedy will be filing a companion bill in the Senate.

It is our belief that the McGovern bill is a sensible attempt to retain Congress' intent to slow the growth in the home health industry while correcting the provisions of the law we believe are unreasonable and unworkable.

Your unwavering advocacy on our behalf has given our members hope that the inequities of the Interim Payment System may be corrected. The patients who depend on the services are grateful.

Once again, many, many thanks for your support of the home health industry.

Sincerely,

KEN McNULTY,
President.
PATRICIA KELLEHER,
Executive Director.